

NEWS



American Public Health Association

800 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3710
(202) 777-APHA • Fax: (202) 777-2534
comments@apha.org • www.apha.org

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Contact: Olivia Chang, (202) 777-2511, olivia.chang@apha.org

APHA Launches Get Ready Campaign to Help Americans Prepare Themselves for Flu Pandemic

Initiative Features New Web Site, Blog and Podcast

Washington, D.C., October 12, 2006 – The American Public Health Association (APHA) today launched the Get Ready campaign to help the public prepare for a potential influenza pandemic and outbreaks of other emerging infectious diseases.

Unlike existing efforts to prepare the nation for a pandemic, APHA's campaign will speak directly to individuals, families and communities and help fill gaps by telling people exactly what they need to prepare themselves. The campaign includes a blog, fact sheets and podcasts, accessible through the Get Ready Web site at <http://www.getreadyforflu.org>.

“With the increasing threat of a flu pandemic, the general public must be equipped with the necessary resources to protect themselves,” said Georges C. Benjamin MD, FACP, executive director of the American Public Health Association. “Unlike many other efforts using technical language and lengthy articles, APHA's Get Ready campaign will provide straightforward information and tools that are crafted for and relevant to all Americans.”

The Get Ready for Flu blog, at <http://www.getreadyforflu.blogspot.com/>, provides readers with background information on avian and pandemic influenza and practical advice on how to prepare themselves, their families and their communities. The blog also provides a discussion forum that addresses emerging issues and allows visitors to share comments and knowledge with others. Current posts include information about the H5N1 strain, food safety, school preparedness and prevention tips.

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In addition to the blog, a new series of podcasts featuring public health experts discusses the need for preparedness and the increasing threat of pandemic flu. Future podcasts will cover topics such as: pandemic flu basics; the impact of pandemic flu on certain communities; safe cooking procedures; and lessons learned from the Spanish flu from 1918 to 1919.

“The Get Ready campaign will draw on the expertise of APHA members to educate the public and give Americans the important information they need to get prepared,” said Patricia Mail, PhD, MPH, CHES, president of APHA. “It fills a critical gap in our nation’s preparedness efforts.”

APHA’s Get Ready campaign is part of the Association’s larger “Protect, Prevent, Live Well” movement that will enable Americans to protect themselves, their families and their communities from preventable, serious health threats. Long-term plans for the Get Ready campaign, which is seeking funding, include grassroots activities, toolkits, community partnerships, preparedness surveys and a calculator that will help people determine what supplies they will need to prepare for pandemic flu and other emerging infectious diseases.

Founded in 1872, the APHA is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. APHA represents a broad array of health providers, educators, environmentalists, policy-makers and health officials at all levels working both within and outside governmental organizations and educational institutions. More information is available at www.apha.org.

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